Joe Plummer

One Sentence Summary

10/13/10

The article “The Dimensions of Disability Oppression” by James Charlton defines the root of disability oppression by taking a deeper look into power, psychology, culture, political economy, and beliefs systems in society.

“The first is the capacity of ruling regimes to instill its values in the mass people through double-speak, misdirection (blame the victim), naturalized inferiority, and legitimated authority” (Charlton 157). Oppression is directly a result of those in power misdirecting the “inferior” into believing that they are in fact inferior through their authority.

“My point to other activist is that the logic of disability oppression closely parallels the oppression of other groups” (Charlton 148). When looking at oppression of the disabled it would be helpful to use the struggles of other oppressed groups from the past.

“Put differently, people with disabilities, like many others, are preponderantly part of a worldwide phenomenon that James O’Connor called ‘surplus population’ and Istvan Meszaros called ‘superfluous people’”(Charlton 149). Our society often puts people who are not considered “normal” into groups such as these.

“To understand the consequences and implications for people with disabilities an analysis is called for which considers how the overarching structures of society influence this trend”(Charlton 147). Charlton is going to be explaining the influences of society on the oppression of disabled people.

“They cannot recognize that their self-perceived pitiful lives are simply a perverse mirroring of a pitiful world order. In this regard people with disabilities have much in common with others who also have internalized their own oppression”(Charlton 151). People in power psychologically cripple those who are not in power, and by accepting what those in power say as correct oppression becomes internalized.

“The point is that consciousness cannot be separated from the real world, from politics and culture. There is an important relationship between being and consciousness” (Charlton 152). Everyone has consciousness and it is directly related to their experiences in the real world and by culture.

“Oppression is a phenomenon of power in which relations between people and between groups are experienced in terms of domination and subordination, superiority and inferiority” (Charlton 153). Oppression is directly related to those who are in power and how they establish their superiority.

“Hegemony and alienation are two sides of the same phenomenon- ideological domination” (Charlton 157). These are the two main arguments made by Charlton made in his analysis.

“Hegemony is diffuse and appears everywhere as natural. It (re)enforces domination not only through the (armed) state but also throughout society: in families, churches, schools, the workplace, legal institutions, bureaucracy, and culture” (Charlton 154) Hegemony is everywhere, and it often goes unnoticed.